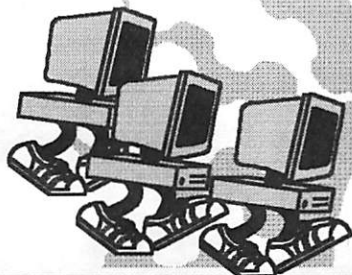




ED508 LANGUAGE ARTS CLASS PORTFOLIO

FALL 1993



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ED 508 READER
RESPONSES



Frameworks
Multiple Intelligences
Calkins
Teaching Children to Care
book report

*My Name is
Alice ?*



Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
September 7, 1993

TEXT

History-Social Science
Framework, p. 3.

" . . . We want student to see the connection between ideas and behavior, between the values and ideals that people hold and the ethical consequences of those beliefs. Students should realize that tragedies and triumphs have resulted from choices made by individuals. They should recognize that ideas and actions have real consequences---that history, in other words, is not simply the ebb and flow of impersonal forces but is shaped and changed by the ideas and actions of individuals and governments. We study history not to register high scores in trivia contests but to learn from the sometimes painful, sometimes exhilarating, often humdrum experiences of those who proceeded us."

How can we make this "alive" in the classroom?

RESPONSE

The connections between beliefs and actions, individuals and history---a rather tall order, but doable. A local PBS station produced a series a few years ago on astronomy. In the past one could imagine how boring such a program could be, with hours of "talking heads" going on about theories and ideas which have barely any connection with the day to day existence of the intended audience. Boring. But the producers of the series, "The Astronomers" as the series name indicates, chose to focus on the men and women around the world who have embraced astronomy as their life's work. Without watering down the "science" or bogging down with meaningless detail series producers mixed state of the art animation and computer graphics with vignettes on the lives of these scientists and their areas of study. The series would make for a great introduction of the subject to someone only marginally interested in science or intimidated by technology.

Even though the series is a subject for the Sciences it still makes for an excellent example of the Frameworks intentions fleshed-out. History and Social studies happens when people and their ideas collide with Life. It's not names and numbers on a timeline.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
September 14, 1993

TEXT

HISTORY, SOCIAL-SCIENCE FRAMEWORK

"Students need to understand why a democracy needs citizens who value give-and-take on issues, who do not feel it necessary to go to war over every idea, and who seek the middle ground on which consensus and cooperation can flourish." p.22 **Civic Values, Rights and Responsibilities**

"The story of the Puritans is equally important in light of their enduring influence on American literature, education, and attitudes toward life and work. Inspired by their religious zeal, Puritans sought to establish a new Zion, 'a city upon a hill,' where they might live out their religious ideals. . . While they came in pursuit of freedom of religion, however, the Puritans were intolerant of dissent." p.52 **US History and Geography: Making a New Nation; Life in New England**

RESPONSE

With the media reflecting minority issues as a "rights" only thing, it is important to bring up the fundamental environment necessary for such rights to be possible.

Perhaps it was assumed that America's religious heritage was being passed on, also perhaps based on a homogeneous impression of America's students but I don't remember much time spent on whatever differences there might have been between the Puritans, Pilgrims or even Quakers, for that matter. As such I would agree that removing the "religious" influence from the history of these people is a distortion of their way of life. In most ways they were governed by their religious beliefs, which may be as foreign to most students as the life-style and culture of Tibetan Monks would be. In whatever way is most appropriate this important element of our forbearers must be included in any discussion of the period.

the exclusion of knowledge is a strong political statement.

TEXT

Calkins, The Notebook: "A Tool for Writing and Living." pp. 36, 37-38:

"My life belongs to me, it matters. I need to put scraps of time and thought away in order to take them out later, to live with and linger with them." Once we have begun to incorporate notebooks into our lives, we can invite youngsters to do the same. . .

"Nothing magical happens simply because youngsters bring notebooks to school. Notebooks can be just another place for writing, or they can represent a new way of thinking about the writing process. The most obvious way in which notebooks have altered my views of writing is that they have served as a concrete, physical invitation to write without requiring me to view my scrawlings as rough drafts of anything in particular. Notebooks have embodied the idea that we put bits of our lives and our thinking into print not only to produce compositions but also because we do not want to walk around unwritten (Gass, 1979). Notebooks have been, for me and for the students with whom I work, an invitation to generate entries, notes, lists, drafts, observations, ramblings on millions of topics and on no particular topic at all. In bringing the idea of notebooks into classrooms, the challenge is more than finding a way for young writers to go through

RESPONSE

I've kept a "journal" for over a decade now. But it's "only" been since '87 that I've kept the thing with some thoughts about it's importance as a source for reflection (future and present) and as a repository of thoughts that I might want to later expand into larger writing project.

Calkin's passion for using a "writer's notebook" is infectious. Years ago I remember speaking with a woman who was studying to be an elementary teacher who, upon hearing about my various writing projects, said, "I could never do any creative writing." Reading Calkin's piece, I'm left to wonder how such a person is going to encourage her students to experiment with their own writing. It seems like a logical progression that a teacher motivates his or her students based on their own involvement with the assignment. But then I remember the disinterested blank stare that my reading student gave me when I tried to bring him into our reading (even when the reading was specially written for him). Oh, that students were as easily motivated to draw literary sketches of their lives or verbal portraits of their dreams. One can only hope and pray and write.

*What motivates writers
to write? where do
they get their
ideas?*

the motions of keeping such a notebook. the challenge is, instead, for them to be so clear about the value of writing that they, too, do not want to walk around unwritten. We want youngsters to value writing. We hope they will begin to carry pencils and pads of paper with them, that they will keep pens beside the phone and in the car and near their books. This is important, first because such writing changes our living, and then because it also changes the composing we eventually do."

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
September 14, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, Teaching Writing

"Each summer, Teachers College holds a two-week institute on teaching writing. Participants write about love and fear and growing old. They write about what they know well, and what they don't know about what they know. They write about emigrating from Russia . . . They do not write stories called "My Life as a Waterfall" or "The Day I was a Pencil." They do not write fake Peace Corps letters, make-believe book jackets, or plot outlines of the books they are reading. They do not choose to write alternate endings for a book or to send letters from one character to another. We, as adults, want to write literature far more than we want to write about literature.

"Our children are no different. They, too, have rich lives . . . "

" . . . Topic choice is part of it, but the larger issue is that, when we invite children to choose their form, voice, and audience as well as their subject, we give them ownership and responsibility for their writing." pp. 5,6
Chap 1 "Tap the Energy to Write."

RESPONSE

I was very fortunate in my freshmen English class at Loyola-Marymount University. I had an instructor who held to a broad interpretation of how we could complete his writing assignments. He allowed for a broad range of topics and was not "overly" wedded to a strict adherence to "academic" English.

I wrote a short story about a cow and a snail (marginally reminiscent of the "tortoise and the hare") and an essay about going to Confession. My friends were surprised that my instructor accepted this work. The key to this experience, as Calkins noted, was that I was allowed to write about things that concerned me, interested me or occupied my world. In fact this practice began in my high school classes (I was always trying to find a way to write about religion---my great concern at the time).

As teachers I can see that we need to "value" the experience that our students have already gathered up in their memories. Even in five short years a lot of living can be "had." I read in another article about bringing the students' lives outside the classroom into the classroom---this would obviously be another way to do that.

*or taking
writing outside
of the classroom
(+ the teacher
for that
matter)
community-based
learning?*

"To teach well, we do not need more techniques, activities, and strategies. We need a sense of what is essential. For this reason, I have begun this book with the question, 'What is essential in teaching writing?'" p.9

" . . . This incident capture something essential about the teaching and learning of writing. We need to write, but we also need to be heard. As Francois Mauriac says, 'Each of us is a desert, and a literary work is like a cry from the desert, or like a pigeon let loose with a message in its claws, or like a bottle thrown into the sea. The point is: to be heard--- even if by one single person.'

"Listening to children--- taking lessons from them---is essential to the teaching of writing. Archibald MacLeish points out that the 'whole situation in a writing course is a reversal of the usual academic pattern. Not only is there no subject, there is not content either. Or, more precisely, the content is the work produced by the students. And the relation of the teacher to his [her] students is thus the opposite of the relationship one would expect to find. Ordinarily it is the teacher who knows, the student who learns. Here it is the student who knows, or should, and the teacher who learns, or tries to' (MacLeish 1959). MacLeish is right: the teacher of writing must be a listener, a coach. But it oversimplifies things to suggest that the classroom teacher is the only one to play the role of the listening teacher. The writing classroom as a whole must become a learning community,

Teaching by listening, what a concept. This book has given me a lot to think about when it comes to my own writing (which "easily" translates into working with my students' writing). What I think Calkins is saying in this chapter is that teaching writing is an interactive process where we as teachers are given the lesson by our students. And our responsibility to provide the environment where the writing and listening can occur.

It is also the listening part that sharpens our writing. The responses that I got during and after sharing a chapters of my book pushed me forward to finish it. It was incredibly motivating to be heard.

Context is as important as the content.

and everyone in it must be both a teacher and a student."
p. 10 Chap 2 "Respond to writing"

"When I went to school, writing was rarely taught; rather, it was assigned and then corrected." **p. 13**

"Writers do not begin a piece, as many curricula suggest, saying 'I want to write a three-paragraph persuasive essay.' They begin, instead, with something to say: 'I need to convince people to take care of the salt marshes,' or 'I want to explore the relationship between critical reading skills and revision.' Then, too, in real life there are no clear distinctions between modes. The writer may begin with the idea of writing a descriptive journal entry and end up writing a poem, an essay, or a newspaper article. Descriptive writing is often woven into a narrative; persuasive writing is often built out of stories; and so on." **p. 14**

"In . . . 'Teaching the Other Self: The Writer's First Reader,' Murray (1982) likens writing to a conversation between two workmen muttering to each other at the bench. 'The self speaks, the other self listens and considers. The self proposes, the other self considers. The self makes, the other self evaluates. The two selves collaborate' (165). Closeness and distance, pushing forward and pulling back, creating and criticism: it is this combination of forces which makes writing such a powerful tool for learning." **p. 19 Chap 3 "When research informs our practice."**

Form over function equals scant creativity and guarantees almost no originality. Little wonder, given the preponderance of "examples," that student mostly stare at blank pages and find little reward in any words that might appear there. Again, I was lucky. My beginning English professor emphasized the "attitude of the author toward his writing" as an essential first step in writing the piece. Whether we were writing short stories, tall tales, essays to inform, essays to persuade, or . . . gasp . . . academic papers it is essential in the readability of piece that we have an attitude or feeling toward the subject. Without this attitude then all we're doing is pulling words together to form a literary laundry list. Boring. Even in journalism (or rather especially in journalism) attitude is key. My CSUF communications professors would canonize "Objectivity" and dismiss "Attitude"; but the very process of picking a story, editing its components, writing the headline and selecting where to run the piece makes that kind of "Objectivity" mythological. Journalists cannot step away from the culture they are reporting on or from the culture they are reporting to like a scientist staring at a beaker (besides why was the scientist interested the beaker to begin with?). The best we can do is to report all of the details of the

Everyone has their subjectivities. It's just a matter of being honest about them.

given story. Journalists
cannot hide behind
"Objectivity" when every one
knows that a story's "slant"
is what lands it on the first
page or on the back page.
Attitude makes writing worth
reading.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
September 21, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, The Art of Teaching Writing, p.32:

"I recently asked my students at teachers College to form an image in their minds of themselves performing as superbly successful teachers.. 'Write down what comes to mind,' I said. Most students described themselves gesturing strongly from the lectern while a roomful of students leaned forward in their seats to catch their teacher's every word. Good teaching is just the opposite: we are the ones who must lean forward in our seats."

"'Teaching writing in kindergarten? I don't believe in it,' a friend recently announced, punctuating her remark with loud sighs and the shake of her head. 'Children need time to be children; to grow through play and song, dance and art.'"

"I agree. Children need time to be children, to grow through natural childhood activities. It is not children---but adults---who have separated writing from art, song, and play; it is adults who have turned writing into an exercise on dotted-line paper, into a matter of rules, lessons, and cautious behavior. Children view

RESPONSE

An excellent example of the gulf between teacher expectations and the "real world." Unfortunately, many prospective teachers are fresh from the bad teaching examples that populate many college classrooms (let's see the prof. demonstrate good interactive teaching technique in an auditorium with 150 students). Fortunately I've had several excellent examples of the listening aspect of teacher and how integral a part of good teaching listening is. Even in the non-academic world of aerobics instruction, the better teacher are aware of their class' performance level and interactively adjust the exercise level accordingly.

I love her focusing in on writing as exploration. I know that I am a chief offender when it comes to writing essays instead of impression. But I also try to not let that get in the way of rambling. In the 70's they used to call it "Stream of Consciousness" writing. It works for me. In a warm supportive environment, I can see how even pre-schoolers can see themselves as authors.

writing quite differently.
For them, it is exploration
with marker and pen. Long
before they come to school,
youngsters leave their mark on
foggy car windows and wet
beaches. We adults, may not
believe in writing for
kindergarten children---but
the children believe in it."
p.35

"Sometimes people ask me
what I think is the most
important message I could
convey to teachers of young
children. My answer is
simple: I want teachers to
delight in what youngsters do.
There is nothing I want more
than for those teachers to
carry some of their children's
writing into the staff room to
share with each other, or for
them to bring pieces home to
share with their own families.
I want teachers to have a
wonderful time watching and
admiring and working with
young writers." p.41

This seems to go along
with the idea of writing as
exploration. Only the focus
here is on delighting in the
exploration of our students.
Life so quickly seems to beat
the "wonder" out of us. It's
unfortunate that we as
teachers so often hasten its
departure in our students
instead of relishing its
existence.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
September 28, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, "Writing Across the Curriculum," Chap. 25

"Yesterday a doctoral student brought me a long draft of the 'Review of Literature' for her dissertation. In the paper, she summarized the studies she had read. I looked over the draft, and asked, 'What are you trying to say in this?' She seemed startled by the question and mumbled something about reporting on various studies. I tried again, this time asking what she had discovered from her research. She couldn't answer that question either. She hadn't considered her views on the material, she'd simply read and reported on what others had to say. I sent her home with the suggestion that she reread her notes and begin free-writing, diagramming, sorting, organizing, talking about, and digesting her topic." p. 267

RESPONSE

Writing as a means of thinking---what a concept. It doesn't surprise me at all that the student in her example was startled by her question. My whole undergraduate program seemed based on the idea of creating a cadre of "writers" who are really nothing more than "court reporters" in the real world. To think, to project from the sources to some direction was forbidden. Granted, it's the common belief that journalism is a form of recording reality, putting reality to print.

The whole concept unfortunately ignores that humans don't operate that way. "Don't bore me with the details---what did you get out of the experience?" That makes for much more involving writing and also recognizes the utility of the practice.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
September 28, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, "Reports: Enfranchise Students as Teachers and They Will Become Learners," Chap. 26

"I told this story to my typist, and he was not surprised. 'Just yesterday, a student from West Connecticut College called to ask if I could type a ten-page report,' he told me. The student arrived twenty-minutes later with a musty old book in hand. 'Just take ten pages from the book,' the student said. 'But do me favor, when you come to big words, change them to small ones.' As he turned to leave, the student added, 'Don't worry, the book is out of print now so they'll never know.'" p. 273

RESPONSE

Ouch, I remember those days. There are ways of mediating between a professor's pet theory and a relative obscure written source and thereby producing amazing "works" of verbosity. But that missed the whole point. In fact the gist of Calkins' argument is that the writing is for the benefit of teacher the teacher. If it's genuine, the student benefits in being heard and encouraged to be a learner too.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
October 4, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, The Art of Teaching Writing, "Writing Conferences," pp 117-118

"Why is it so difficult to give a simple human response? I think it is because we try so hard to be helpful we forget to be real. We forget to listen. I used to think listening was easy, that you just sat there and waited while the other person had a chance to say something, and then you talked. But I have come to realize that listening is the hardest thing I do. In *Lesson from a Child*, I make an analogy between listening and playing tennis:

"I once thought watching the ball in tennis was easy too. When I was a kid, my mother used to shout from across the net saying, 'Keep your eye on the ball,' I remember thinking, 'Obviously you watch the ball.' Obviously you listen.

"But the other day on the tennis courts, I watched the ball---and it was a entirely new sensation. I was mesmerized by the ball; watching it come over, as if in slow motion, then the bounce, the climb; then it hung, suspended for an instant. Why was that day different? Because I wasn't apologizing for my bad shots or tidying my hair or pulling my shorts down so I wouldn't look fat or remembering to step into the ball. I wasn't thinking about myself.'

RESPONSE

Great chapter---listening and the element of "control" in teaching writing---much can be learned here. One of the more incredible things that I learned during my year on CSUF's student paper, The Daily Titan, was how poorly people listened to each other. Here we were, a roomful of communications major, and no one seemed capable of communicating with each other. I worked on the Entertainment section and my editor loathed my existence (and I wasn't too fond of hers). The editors as a group considered the reporters to be a lower form of life and treated them with contempt. The reason for the editors' disposition was that they generally had at least one years experience on the paper beyond the younger reporters, and being an editor was usually their first brush with power (although some had worked on their high school paper---and that somehow added to their self-assumed godhood). None of this sat very well with yours truly (especially considering that I started writing before most of these kids were born). Anyway, what satisfaction I garnered from the experience was in helping the other writers work on their pieces. Unencumbered with the task of wielding the editorial whip, I was at liberty to actually ask my fellow reporters about their work. It was amazing how much more smoothly things

"When we first learn to confer with writers, we often worry so much about asking the right questions that we forget to listen. We focus on asking the questions that will draw out more information, not realizing that it is listening that creates a magnetic force between writer and listener. The force of listening will draw words out; writers will find themselves saying things they didn't know they knew."

pp. 123-124:

"One day I wrote something other than an application essay. Somehow I got up the nerve to send that piece to Murray, whose book I was reading, and to ask if he would help me make it better. Murray wrote back saying yes. That Saturday, and as it turned out, one Saturday a month for the next two years, I drove two-and-a-half hours to the University of New Hampshire for a fifteen-minute conference with Murray and then drove two-and-a-half hours back to Connecticut. As a teacher of writing, I often think back to that: five hours of driving for a fifteen-minute conference! What did Murray teach me that was so important?

"He taught me I had something to say."

went when no one's self-esteem was on the line or when the recognized goal was problem-solving and not intimidation.

At one point during the sometimes tumultuous course of my life I started seeing a MFC counsellor. It had been my ex-wife's "suggestion" and even after the marriage expired I continued my weekly sessions. One of the reasons that I continued seeing him was because he had become a great "sounding board" for my writing.

Early on it was decided that my ex-wife and I would see him separately and as a natural result of asking me how things were going I started reading him my journal. That might seem a bit odd but I already knew that I was more comfortable expressing myself in my writing and that he would be a sympathetic audience. Interestingly, his enthusiastic response to my weekly ramblings contributed in no small way to my thirst to improve on my writing. Much like Calkins' observation, he made me feel like I had something important to say.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
October 22, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, Teaching Writing,
Sec. 4, Chap. 17, p. 163:

Any mention, these days, of open classrooms conveys images of laissez-faire teaching and unstructured chaos. I do not think the reputation of American open-classroom schools is entirely unwarranted. At their best, these progressive schools are excellent; but the best has been rare. At their worst, they deserve the criticism they receive. David Hawkins describes the problem this way:

What Dewey called "the supremacy of method" is subtly wrong. . . . There are some truths that require at least two sentences. The first truth may well be that art of inquiry is educationally more fundamental than the facts and truths established by that practice. But the second truth, no less important, is that the art cannot grow except by what it feeds on. . . . Method consists in using knowledge to gain further knowledge, . . . and the mind equipped with method and no content . . . is an absurdity.

RESPONSE

Good intentions badly executed, the "modern" era of many academic disciplines are replete with such examples. The difficulty, whether the discipline is Philosophy or Education, is generally one of structure and some basic assumptions. That is, the atmosphere of freedom and "openness" assumes a basic social structure as a backdrop or, as in the case of Existentialism, to rebel against. But without this backdrop the efforts largely decline into meaninglessness.

What does this mean for education? It means that while being "Open" and "Democratic" the educational system must also provide the structure and background that make the openness possible. In most cases there are no other institutions to provide this necessary service. Church, Community, Family---they've become a couple of Shakespearean Ghosts who make their vaporous appearances only around voting time (or at the TV media's whim). Meals, manners, personal hygiene, morals, self-esteem---they have become the purview of the educational system.

In the non-life threatening case of Calkin's Writer's Workshop this translates in subtly providing the structure for the

Hawkins argues that the greatest art in teaching is the art of combination and he includes in this the combination of high teacher input and high student input. Many open-education teachers, in their enthusiasm for process and for student input in the curriculum, seem to reject formal instruction entirely. Yet when students are deeply absorbed in their subject matter, formal instruction can bring students to new levels of understanding and teacher-interventions can lead them to probe, test, and learn. (pp. 163-164).

Chap 18, p. 167ff:

I learn best when I am deeply absorbed by a topic and when this involvement is guided by well-timed tips from experts. (167)

I find that the ritual of beginning every writing workshop with a whole-group gathering brings form and unity to the workshop. . . Nutshell meetings? Writing huddles? Then she realized that instead of what she perceived as a mini-lesson, she had begun the workshop with a quick tip. (168)

Chap 19: (Mini-lessons: Early Writing):

Although many young writers will need very little help with spelling, some will need to learn how to listen for sounds. In mini-lessons, I sometimes encourage children to stretch out a work, listening slowly to the component sounds. Recently,

exercises' cohesiveness. It means not standing back and letting "the process" take over, but offering input and structure as only the teacher can.

I like Calkin's analogy of the beginning meeting of each "Hill Street Blues" episode as a way of understanding the mini-lesson. It's not Q-and-A. It's not the Sermon on the Mount. It's more like the coach's talk before the game---a brief admonition focused on the task immediately at hand.

If Chapter 19 is any indication, than mini-lessons play a pivotal role in Writers Workshop. Mini-lessons shoulder the difficult tasks of spelling, grammar, editing, and classroom management.

The chapter pointed out two basic principles of "good teaching": (1) planning, and (2) contextual instruction.

after gathering together a group of five-year-olds, Martha Horn, one of the teacher trainers in our project, brought out a miniature chalkboard and told the class they were going to be spellers. "Does anyone have a special word we could spell together?" she asked. The children suggested spaghetti, Tyrannosaurs Rex, and hippopotamus, and then the class worked together to say the words slowly. "Watch my hand, and see if you can say it as slowly as my hand goes," Martha said, stretching out the word with her hand. "Stretch it like a rubber band," She urged, "and listen to the sounds." Then she asked, "What sounds do you hear?" and transcribed the children's guesses on the chalkboard. Her purpose was not to arrive at correct spellings, of course, but to model the process of spelling words. For this reason, if a child called out an incorrect letter, Martha did not correct the youngster. (p. 174)

(Mini-lessons: Topics):

When I lead writing workshops for adults, as I often do in conjunction with our summer institute on the teaching of writing, I find that a surprising number of my mini-lessons deal with the issue of topics. I know the reason: I want my students to have successful writing experiences and it seems that when they find the right topic, half the battle is won. The reverse is also true: I have the hardest time helping

In the spelling example Calkin demonstrates how using a mini-lesson can avoid the "I need help spelling this word" bottleneck.

Working on spelling problems is generally the bane of any language arts program. Martha Horns use of different modes (visual, verbal) is intriguing

Topics, ugh. One thing that this chapter points out is a personal pet-peeve of mine. I am convinced that important, meaningful, moving writing can be produced that does not contain murder, shooting, violence, the end of the world, atomic explosions or the underdog slugging the hell out of the bad guy. I love science-fiction but I'm really getting tired of "Luke" saving the universe from the mean-and-nasties by the use of

writers when their drafts are those which Macrorie describes as "all style and no content." For this reason, even after a launch which deals largely with topic choice, I am apt to spend the second day (and perhaps the fourth, and tenth) on topics. (pp.178-179)

(Mini-lessons: Rehearsal):

Several years ago I watched a youngster alternate between writing and crumpling her paper. With tremendous intensity, she would lean low over her paper and carefully write her story. Then, taking the page in both hands, she'd scrunch it this way and that. I was astonished and bewildered by what I saw and so I asked the youngster what she was doing. "Revising," she answered, as she proudly patted the well-worn page. "See, it is all loved up." (185)

(Mini-lessons: Qualities):

The children's values will differ from ours. Many children place high value on good pictures, action, excitement, and funny topics. We will want to share our criteria for evaluating writing with children, and although each of us will stress the qualities we know and care about, certain characteristics will pertain to most texts. (191)

Chap 20: editing:

The research is conclusive. Teaching formal grammar has no effect on the quality of student writing. After an extensive review of

psycho-babble mumbo-jumbo. Ugh. I like the idea of starting small and writers waking us up to the wonder in the normally mundane (especially 3- and 4-foot writers)

I had to include this passage because it is a perfect example of how differently kids think from us (or probably more correctly, how differently we think from them).

Sometimes it is important to have a child's mind to understand why one line of text and a page of flowers tells the story just as well as our "perfectly structured paragraphs." Clearly explaining our expectations without dictating them.

If chapter 19 is pivotal, chapter 20 is most likely the most controversial. I could just imagine giving my father a copy of the chapter and watch him fly through the

the literature on grammar instruction, Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer conclude,

In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in actual composition, even a harmful effect on the improvement of writing.
(195)

...I do know I would not teach nouns, verbs, and prepositions in an elementary school classroom. That is a battle I would fight, confident that the research is so clear, I could convince others. Perhaps, however, I would recommend a semester of linguistics within the senior high school curriculum. Even then, I am not sure I would teach the grammar that was taught to me. Research suggests that Latin-based grammar is not the ideal way to describe the English language. I would perhaps teach sector-analysis or transformational grammar.
(197)

... My first point, then, is that the single most important thing we can do for students' syntax, spelling, penmanship, and use of mechanics is to have them write often and with confidence.
(197)

roof. But then it makes perfect sense that what is learned contextually is going to have more impact than "drill and kill." I love it.

Not teach nouns, verbs, prepositions? How are the poor students going to know the difference between "to", "too", "two", and "ye tu"? Getting verb-noun agreement and consistent verbal tense is important but not at the expense making writing into a torture session. I like Calkins admonition that teachers encourage students to separate the composition process from the editing/revision process. I know as a writer I can expect to write thousands of words to come up with a few choice phrases but if I sweat blood for every single word than I'll never find those phrases. By the way, I have no idea what "sector-analysis" or "transformational grammar" but anything would be an improvement over the Latin system (Amos, Aman, Amat, Amomos ... I seem to have forgotten how to conjugate the verb "to be"---not that I ever knew Latin).

... The premise that underlies Mina Shaughnessy's brilliant book, Errors and Expectations, is that we need to respect the intelligence behind our students' errors. Shaughnessy is addressing especially the needs of basic writers when she writes, "The inexperienced teacher is almost certain to see nothing but a chaos of error when he first encounters their papers. Yet a closer look will reveal very little that is random or 'illogical' in what they have written. And the keys to their development as writers often lie hidden in the very features of their writing that English teachers have been trained to brush aside with ... a scribbled 'Proofread!'" (201)

I love this part, the underlying "logic" behind student "errors." It's another thing that talks about the gaps between the way children communicate and the way adults communicate. Bridging the gap between the visions in the hearts of children and "standard English" is what we're trying to accomplish, or empower student writers to accomplish. There is a whole wonderful world lurking behind the scribbles and "creative spellings" that will never be discovered if we stifle it with a red pen and "correct English" mentality.

We have a long history of imposing our world (adult) over theirs which have caused "missed opportunities" in understanding their sense-making. This is a habit (an unexamined habit) which needs to be confronted.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
November 2, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, Teaching Writing, Sec. 5, Chap. 22, p. 225ff:

But if you believe, as I do, that authorship is a process and that it involves new ways of relating to reading, then helping children see themselves as authors should be the beginning rather than the end of a writers workshop. "As soon as your workshop is underway," I often tell teachers, "it is time to help children view themselves as authors. Publish the pieces, put out book binding supplies, celebrate their finished work . . . and do it by late September."

Chap 23, p. 235:

The reading-writing connection may be fashionable, but current applications of it often hurt both disciplines.

Am I, then, against the reading-writing connection? Not at all, But I think putting a little writing into every reading activity amounts to putting on a Band-Aid. Such a solution hides the real problems. We may squeeze, push, and pull the curriculum to connect reading and writing, but the connections which really matter are those the children make, in a natural fashion, in their day-to-day lives as readers and writers. Perhaps we should focus our attention less on making their connections for them and more on making our own connections. We need to build our own links between methods of teaching writing and reading, and we need to draw on the best we know from both areas so that our children become

RESPONSE

Making the connection between the text being read by the teacher and their own pieces is an important step in bringing the reading to life and finding models for their own writing. I also like the idea of not putting off "publishing" until some one time end of semester event. That way these little writers see their writing and publishing as a process and one fuels the other.

*Big Flashy event? or
regular celebrations?*

Some what repeating the previous idea Calkins now admonishes that the connection between reading and writing should not be a frivolous one (kids see through those things so easily). If we're going to do it, we must do it well. Not during the last 5-minutes of "reading time" but part and parcel of the whole process.

lifelong writers, readers, and connectors of reading and writing for themselves.

Chap 24, p. 253:

For about six weeks, the format of Rose's writing workshop remained the same. One child from each group selected a book, and then each child read a copy of it at his or her own pace. After a half hour so silent reading, the children met in response groups. Then the whole class gathered on the floor at the back of the room for a reading/writing discussion that led into the writing workshop. Once these routines were in place, the children began assuming increasingly active roles in the workshops.

Good writing is showing not tell and good teaching is doing not talking. This teacher made some great connections between a writers workshop format and her reading class. Unfortunately her first attempts at implementing it was too heavily teacher directed (which runs contrary to the whole writers workshop idea) and did not adequately take into account her students interests. Fortunately the story concludes with a happy ending.

Joe Bustillos
ED 508, sec. 01, Language Arts
Reader Response
November 5, 1993

TEXT

Calkins, Teaching Writing, Sec. 6, Chap. 27, p. 315:

My last day in poetry workshop was June 13. It was a hot, sticky day. The children had all worn shorts and T-shirts, and their clothes stuck to their damp skin. We all felt sweaty, yet somehow this added to the mood. Everywhere writers toiled over their drafts. The classroom felt, sounded, smelled like a newsroom. Many of the children were still working on their poetry. Six or eight were compiling a book of poems to give to the principal, several others were typing up final drafts, and still others were into new poems. When Morat saw me, he motioned for me to come over when I had a chance. When I got to him, Morat handed me a little scrap of paper. "It's a poem in Russian," he whispered, not wanting to distract the others.

At the end of that workshop, Rose told the class that Morat had brought something special for the share meeting. Morat sat in the author's chair, looking very shy and embarrassed, and in Russian, he read a poem he'd brought with him when he moved to America. He read it several times, and the class marveled at the sound of the poem. "It's so beautiful it hardly matters that we don't know the meaning," they said. Again and again the class listened to it, admiring its sounds. Watching all of this, I thought of how embarrassed Morat had been, at the start of the year, about the Russian language. "It's the worst punishment in the world when my parents

RESPONSE

Several of my classmates have already expressed their displeasure in Calkins apparent desire to recall every poignant moment during her writers workshop experience. In the crush to get our readings done and papers/journals written I can understand this particular complaint. But as a writer I have to I have found enough of value to justify her occasional "extended anecdote." This particular chapter, being mostly anecdotal reminded me of the days when I routinely let poetry bubble to the surface. *the key - how, where, when*

ACROSS THE STREET

Across the street
there was an ice cream store
and there was a pizza parlor
just next door.

And across the open field
that's where the trains would run.

I imagine on a cloudy day
walking its rails would be fun.

But I never did those things
though my mind would dream of them.
I just stayed inside my little room
I spent my time within.



JBB:4-12-84

make me practice my Russian," he had told me, and now, here he was, reciting this beautiful Russian poem to all his friends, and sharing their pleasure over the sound of his language. Later, Morat would translate the poem into English, struggling with the issues any translator knows. Before the year ended, other children would bring in poems from their countries. Watching all of this and thinking back to it now, I have an unbelievably strong response to the entire poetry workshop. The feeling is a physical one. In my stomach, I have such a feeling of pride and warmth, such a sense of "God, is this ever important," that I almost feel ready to write a poem.

Chap. 28, pp. 317ff:

"Fiction is easy. You just get an idea and write it out. It doesn't matter what you put because it's not real."

"I think up a crazy title like *Mystery of the Blue Popcorn* and then I make up a weird story to go with it. I put down the opposite of the truth. I tell a lie in the story"

These third graders---Carmella and Jerome---are member of a very fine writing classroom. For several years now they have drafted and revised their writing, conferring with each other and with themselves. Yet their concept of fiction seems distorted and their pieces of fiction echo that distortion.

One day I was coming out of MacDonalds and I saw a car crash into a lady. The blood was gushing everywhere. Bullets zoomed past me. Screams filled the air. I dropped my hamburger. I was so scared. Then I saw the criminal. I ran and ran after him until he was caught for good.

THE END

After slugging it out for over a decade (albeit, not continuously) with my first "work" of fiction I find Calkins' students' observations hilarious. It sent me back looking for my first "fictional" stories, written back in high school. Alas, the best I could do was find a story from my College beginning English class (there is a noted similarity between it and the above mentioned work about Briff). Thus follows:

HERMAN THE COW

In an undisturbed valley, below the west slope of the majestic . . . um . . . the towering . . . um . . . well, the quaint San Bernadino mountains, a small herd of cattle was grazing. Among the cattle was a bouncy young calf named Herman. Now while he was not one the more intelligent of those in the heard, Herman nonetheless had learned to enjoy life and to bear with the pressures of its day to day routine.

It was a day like any other when Herman ran into Sam, the snail. Herman had been feeding on tall slender blades of grass very contentedly, letting his taste-buds

become involved with every inc of each green morsel, when his monstrous nose touched a small pebble-like object. Thinking that it was just a pebble, or maybe even an unfortunate rubber ball left by some sojourner's son, Herman began to playfully push the small hard object about the tall blades of grass. His fun, however, was soon interrupted by a loud, "Hey you! What do you think you're doing?!"

The startled Herman looked up to see who it was that was calling him. Finding nobody, Herman returned to his game, only to find that his "pebble" had grown feelers and a slimy body and was now yelling at him, "I said, what do you think you're doing, you foolish cow!"

"Well, I . . . I" Herman staggered to find the words, "I . . . I was just . . ."

"You were just what?! I'll have you know that you're not pushing around just any snail. I'm Sam, the wor . . ."

"Oh, hi Sam. I'm Herman."

"Listen cow . . ."

"Herman, my name's Herman."

"Listen, Herman, you'd better watch what you're doing. I'll have you know that you're talking to the winner of the hundred-meter dash in the 1965 Olympics."

"You?! No, way!" Herman said while he shook his head like a little boy being forced to eat something that he didn't want to.

"What do you mean, 'No way!'?"

"I mean, no way!" The two continued to argue for the better part of an hour. Finally Sam said, "All right, I'll prove it to you. I'll race you from here to that barbed-wire fence over there. But you're gonna have to give me a fifteen-yard head-start."

"Hummm, I . . . Hey, wait a minute, from here to there is fifteen-yards."

"You can't blame a guy for trying."

"Huh?"

"Well if we're going to race," Sam continued, "we'll have to decide what type of timing system we'll need. Now we can use an electronic system or just stopwatches. I think . . . no, but I . . . let's see." As Sam began to weigh the virtues of an electronic system over a stopwatch, Herman's mind clouded as to what exactly it was that Sam wanted to prove. "In the even of a tie," the snail continued, "we'll need some sort of a committee to make the final decision for who wins. Now, let's see, should their tables be round or square. Hummm, maybe we should form a committee to decide that too." Sam got so involved with the planning stage that he forgot all about Herman, who was just about the fall asleep.

"Hummm," Sam began to devise loopholes in the rules that would assure him victory. In the meantime, Herman's body began to sway because, you see, it's hard for cows to sleep standing up¹ His swaying didn't continue for long though. The bored cow was soon lying on his side in the tall green grass . . . the tall green grass that unfortunately hid the home of some very vicious red ants. The vicious beasts wasted no time in making Herman's hide into a pin-cushion. Just as Sam finished the final draft of the rules (he had written five different versions), the once dormant cow violently awoke, and aimlessly darted across the open field with a host of red carnivores falling off his back as he went.

¹Actually, I didn't realize at the time that cows normally sleep standing up---but that would have ruined the story. Ugh.

As the dust began to settle over the once peaceful valley, the confused snail peered over the trampled grass that Herman had left in his wake. And just as he lost sight of the cow he shouted<, "Hey, I didn't say 'Go'!!"

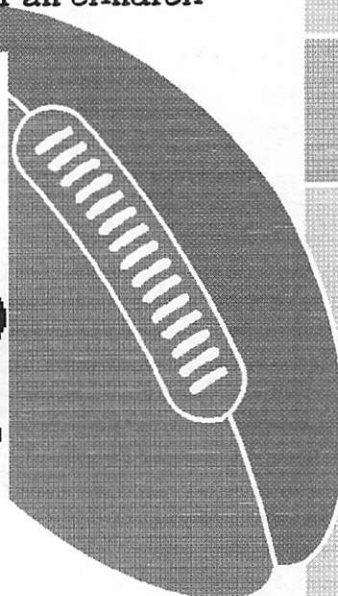
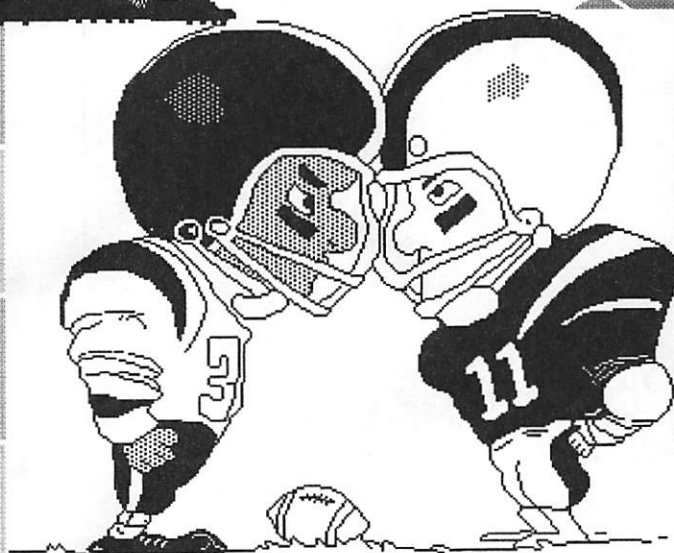
Moral One: The child-like individual, though sometimes unconsciously, will be the victor.

Moral Two: Don't play with innocent looking pebbles or snails.

TIME OUT!

ED508 - Charney Ch. 6

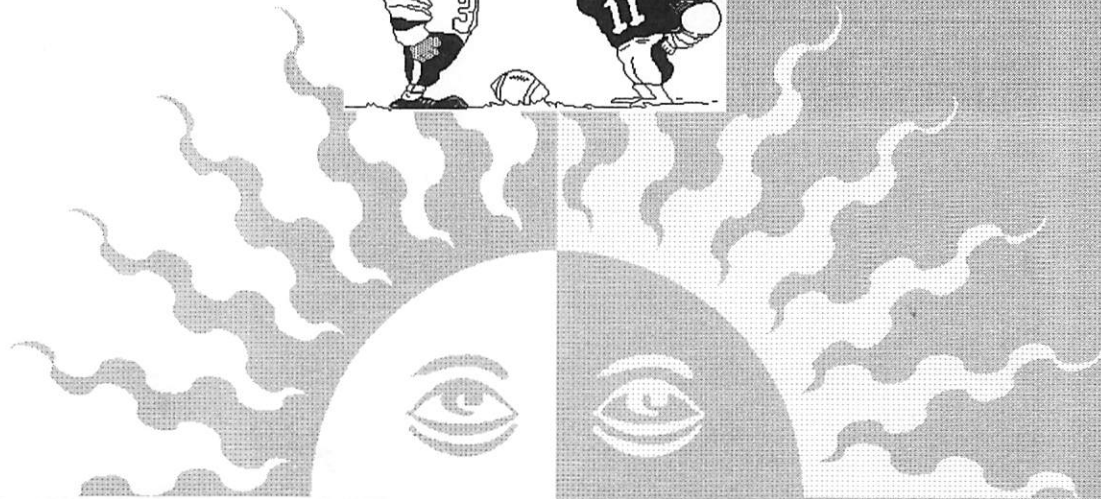
1. Familiar, consistent, predictable procedure
2. Small things = time out
3. Time-outs protect the integrity of the school rules, & the work of the group & student
4. Time-out is a direction, not a negotiation
5. "I like you, but I don't like that behavior"
6. Time-outs emphasize choice and faith
7. Time-outs are democratic
8. Time-outs may be completed in another classroom
9. Teachers need to show empathy for their rule-breakers
10. Time-outs do not work for all children



ED 508 FIELDWORK HOURS AND OBSERVATIONS



"What we cannot or will
not settle on the
playground, we cannot
hope to settle in the
boardroom. The future
is now."



EDUC 508 Teaching Strat: Language Arts Observation Log

DATE	HOURS	SCHOOL	SIGNATURE
9/23	1.5	Woodcrest Elem.	S. West
9/29	1.5	Woodcrest Elem.	S. West
9/30	1.5	Woodcrest Elem.	S. West
10/13	1.5	Woodcrest Elem.	S. West
10/20	1.5	" "	S. West
11/10	1.5	" "	S. West
11/16	3.0	GONSALVES "	B. Brown
11/23	2.0	GONSALVES "	B. Brown
11/24	2.5	WOODCREST "	S. West
11/30	2.0	GONSALVES "	
12/2	1.5	WOODCREST "	S. West
12/3	2.0	LAMPSON "	Christie Yoshida

Joe Bustillos'
EDUC 508 Teaching Strat:
Language Arts Observation Journal

OBSERVATION DATE: September 23, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

My first time in Ms. Weston's classroom. It's been a while since I've been in a third grade classroom (my knees were sore the next day from crouching so much---maybe that's one reason men tend to gravitate toward the upper grades, it's not as hard on the joints).

In today's activities the students met as a large group and Ms. Weston talked with them about various attributes about the mountains. She asked them to tell her things that were true about mountains. After they'd come up with a couple of ideas they went back to their seats and working in groups they had to come up with one sentence about the mountains. After they came up with their sentences they met as a large group and Ms. Weston walked them through changing their sentences into a paragraph. She used sentence strips and scissors to take their rough drafts and make a paragraph. It was a very visual and graphic lesson on string a sentence into a paragraph.

OBSERVATION DATE: September 29, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

I'm beginning to become more familiar with Ms. Weston's students and her teaching style. The first thing that I noticed was that while she was generally positive with her students she was also quite firm. What was acceptable and unacceptable was clearly communicated. There was no arguing or bartering over the facts. And yet Ms. Weston was not aloof or "overly strict." There seemed to be a very good balance between making school enjoyable and keeping things under control.

Today the students spent more time drawing and writing in their journals about mountains. I learned that Ms. Weston has them keep a word list at their desk so that when they have trouble spelling a word they go to that notebook before going to another student or teacher. Unfortunately, this early in the year there are definitely more words that they aren't sure about than that they are sure about. I spent more time on my knees helping little spellers wrestle with geological terminology. It was fun.

OBSERVATION DATE: September 30, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

Suffering with a substitute---I knew that she'd be here but thought that it might help a little if I showed up anyway (I'm beginning to show an amazing level of possessiveness for someone just observing a class). Alas, I

*You've got the right idea -
bonding with a class - 1st step
in determining curriculum.*

gave myself too much credit. The students were working on drawing their maps following a rather long reading by the substitute. Things were slightly more chaotic than either I or the students were used to. The hour-and-a-half didn't go quickly enough.

OBSERVATION DATE: October 13, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

Today we had a fire drill. The kids were relatively orderly and quiet. They certainly weren't standing "like statues" (whose idea was that anyway?) but they were certainly manageable. Ms. Weston has gotten her class to the point where if they're beginning to "fall out of line" she pauses the activity and waits until she has their attention and then briefly "cautions" whomever is in danger of crossing the line. One of the classes next door was being yelled at for ... I don't know what, they were just being yelled at. God, I hope I don't become *that* kind of teacher.

OBSERVATION DATE: October 20, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

Substitute---I've shown up only to find Ms. Weston has a substitute. There is such a difference in the classroom when this substitute is in charge. I hate to say this but this is a perfect example of how teaching has changed since this substitute was probably a full-time teacher. I hope I'm not

speaking out of turn but there is such a difference in maintaining control without being harsh or making it into some sort of challenge. Granted as a substitute this woman is not in a position to appeal to the belief that "this is not the way we do things around here" which Ms. Weston often uses. But it goes beyond that.

There was some reading assigned and the substitute read through the whole section for over thirty-minutes without a break or without involving the students in the reading. I was beginning to squirm before she was finished---I couldn't imagine how insane these antsy third-graders were feeling. Thirty-minutes of reading about the desert is one thing that I hope I shall never subject another human being to.

OBSERVATION DATE: November 10, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

It had been a while since I'd been in Ms. Weston's class. The class, of course, didn't forget who I was. The class had begun their Native American unit. The group activity was to read through a several paragraphs on Native Americans which Ms. Weston had put up near their reading rug. She read the paragraph to them and then they read the paragraph as a group. And then someone was chosen to hold the pointer while someone else read a paragraph. Someone else was then chosen for the pointer and a new reader was given the next paragraph. Ms. Weston decided to wait until next time to let them highlight the text of the paragraph. They were then sent back to their seats to write the paragraph in their journals and to come up with their

own highlighting. They really seemed to like highlighting their text---it seemed very important to them. Some of the students started to illustrate their stories.

I spent some time copying down the "What do you know/What do you want to know" listing that they had already made about Native Americans. I'm hoping to use the info in our Thematic unit project. Ms. Weston's class has been a very good source of ideas and impressions about teaching.

OBSERVATION DATE: November 16, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 3.0

PLACE: Gonsalves Elementary - Brown 5th Grade

COMMENTS:

When I arrived some of Mrs. Brown's students were giving oral presentations. It had the feel of an oral exam but it was an oral exam among friends. Some of the students had to be encouraged to speak louder. At least one student had to be told to slow down in her rapid-fire delivery. As a group the students were very animated, very interested in reading their pieces and much interested in the review process afterwards. They seemed to be a very extroverted bunch. After each student read they were given a one-clap salute. Great individual/group activity.

The class was then divided into three groups of as many as ten students each. Each group was given the same section of a text on Indians to read. It was a very long, very content-intense section, but Mrs. Brown expressed a lot of confidence that her students could master the material. Prior to this activity they had evidently done other reading about Indian customs and traditions and had given their group Indian names. They also

showed an interesting habit of giving each other "Indian" names based on their boasting or silliness (eg., "Jen who hogs the ball on the playground," "Zeke who smiles at himself too much").

Some of us observing the class (there was a very large Chapman contingent in attendance today----five in Mrs. Brown's class and five more "next door") were surprised that Mrs. Brown would have the students work in such large groups. Someone commented that even adults would find it difficult to read such a large section in groups of ten. Interestingly, there was a natural tendency for some students to take charge and push the reading exercise along (at least one student's turn to read was cut short because he was holding up his groups progress). Understandably, some students seemed at risk of getting lost in the process. The part that we didn't know about and which the students learned midway through their reading was that following the activity they'd meet as a large group and representatives would be selected from each group at random and would have to answer questions related to the reading for group points. Mrs. Brown told her students where the questions would come from and the exercise became a modified jigsaw with the natural leaders in each group making sure that every member knew the material. Before the quiz at the end was revealed the groups were in danger of losing some of their members. Once the goal was revealed their concentration took on almost a sports-level of importance. It seemed like a very effective way to get the information across and also catered the classes natural personality. A class with no group enthusiasm or too much negativity would not have taken up the challenge that Mrs. Brown gave this class. This was a very good example of matching what might have been a

mundane reading assignment (either by reading to them or having them plow through it on their own) with a mode that fit the class personality.

OBSERVATION DATE: November 23, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 2.0

PLACE: Gonsalves Elementary - Brown 5th Grade

COMMENTS:

Today's class seemed a bit small than the last time. But then part of the class was working on Indian coil-pottery in the common area between the classrooms. Mrs. Brown began Writer's Workshop with a mini-lesson about conferences and due dates. She then spent a good amount of time going from student to student with her notebook checking on their progress and developing ideas. There seemed to be a very playful rapport between Mrs. Brown and her students. Given how physically confining the classroom seemed to be (especially compared to Ms. Weston's classroom with it's reading rug area) the students certainly seemed attentive but unstified in their energy. The room had a certain lived-in comfortable quality to it. There is a definite personal quality to Mrs. Brown's approach to her class and their work effort. The teacher and her students seem very much in sync with each other.

*What's it take to get there?
Is this a productive learning
environment? How do you
know?*

OBSERVATION DATE: November 24, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 2.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

Ms. Weston's class was well into the Indian Thematic unit. Her large group activity for today was to work through a storyboard with the class about an Indian boy from a Pacific-Northwest tribe. She had six (or eight) panels describing how the Indians made their large boats. Each panel described a specific function in making the boat (beginning with the boy standing out in from of his house next to a totem pole, cutting down the big trees, softening the wood . . . right down to the Indians taking the boat out and catching giant fish---Ms. Weston's fish were not to scale, oops).

Afterward she had the student write in their journals what part of the story they liked or what information was new to them. After writing a sentence or two the students were allowed to illustrate their stories.

After this activity the students had a weaving project to work on. They had taken the ever-useful popsicle sticks and made a cross and were weaving various colored strands of yarn in a circular pattern around the sticks creating a round "shield." Some of the students were braiding the long "tails" that would be attached to the shield. At least one boy took great pride that he knew how to braid his own yarn and didn't need a girl to help him. Everyone seemed most contented to work in pairs (it took two people to weave the tails) or by themselves. There was a small problem with yarn being left in the common area but that was quickly remedied without unnecessary bloodshed (just kidding).

OBSERVATION DATE: December 2, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 1.5

PLACE: Woodcrest Elementary - Weston 3rd Grade

COMMENTS:

In all of the time that I've spent in Ms. Weston's class this is the first time that I've been there when her student teacher has been there. Besides the student teacher, there was the district (?) art teacher there giving the students a lesson on making a relief painting. With Ms. Weston's relatively small class there seemed to be more adults than students present. The students certainly didn't suffer from a lack of attention. This was also probably the first time I've seen Ms. Weston sit down that wasn't connected to reading to her class.

The class was well behaved especially given the distracting schedule (that infamous zone between Holidays) and all these adults roaming around the classroom. As always Ms. Weston controlled her class with a firm but friendly grip---a talent that I would do well to master (one can only hope).

*Ask her how she
cultivates this skill.*

OBSERVATION DATE: December 3, 1993

AMOUNT OF TIME: 2.0

PLACE: Lampson Elementary - Yoshida 5th Grade

COMMENTS:

It's that "interesting" time between holidays when student concentration is at a premium and schedules dictate staccato lesson plans and learning patterns. On Fridays the fifth graders spend 40-minutes shifts with the other fifth grade teachers. I was in Ms. Yoshida's class long enough to see two rotations of her art lesson. She had them work with a water-color

design (covering half the paper with clear water and then drop their colors onto the wet paper---and then repeat on the other half) and then added a Christmas tree silhouette to the design---making it look like there were surrealistic blinking lights in the tree. The kids seemed to have fun. They were well behaved and followed her clear directions very well.

Because I had called Ms. Yoshida the night before asking if I could observe her class (I'd observed it on a separate occasion for Math/Science) she sprung a surprise Geography quiz at her homeroom students---sorry guys. As a whole class she put some state maps on the overhead and had the students run through the different states. The kids did far better than I would have done if I'd had that quiz popped in my direction. Of the half dozen kids who were called upon, only one seemed to be guessing. Ms. Yoshida gave the student enough time to switch from guessing-mode to thinking the problem through. And the other students were more than "helpful" at providing clues. There seemed to be a very good rapport between the teacher and the students, and among the students.

ED 508 THEMATIC PROJECT

***NATIVE AMERICANS:
LOOKING FOR AUTHENTIC VOICES***

FALL 1993

***JACKI LAWRENCE
SHALINI PATEL
JOE BUSTILLOS***



LANGUAGE ARTS THEMATIC PROJECT

by

Shalini Patel,
Jacki Lawrence
and Joe Bustillos

*God hath made of one blood
all nations of men
-Acts of the Apostles 18:26*

DECIDING ON A THEME:

*There is but one race—humanity.
-George Moore*

Those of us who would hope to become teachers in California, while assenting George Moore's sentiment, cannot afford to confuse that Race with the Eurocentric Macro-culture which most of us were raised with. So what does this mean to the teacher in the classroom? I mean, without even mentioning multiculturalism or multi-ethnicity, many educators are already feeling like they have to pay attention to more Special Interest Groups than most Freshman Congressmen. But the unfortunate reality is that when the Framework talks about "Cultural Literacy" or "Historical Literacy" it's no longer enough for us to talk about the first Thanksgiving dinner and Iriquois Longhouses and feel like we've covered it. It is our belief that one major key to addressing this problem is to make authentic voices accessible to the students in the classroom. In this case, learn about Native Americans from Native Americans, on their own terms.



RESEARCH QUESTION:

THE BIG OUTCOME:

At the conclusion of this thematic unit the students should be able to demonstrate verbally, in their journals and/or pictorially that Native Americans are not the war-mongering savages often portrayed in popular media. After having an opportunity to speak with a Native American leader students will write letters to ask additional questions and/or to share brief comments. Students will also demonstrate their understanding of Native Americans by doing Native American crafts such as painting and pottery (under highly controlled circumstances woodcarving could be "simulated" using bars of soap and plastic knives).

Beyond how this thematic unit applies specifically to Native Americans, students will be encouraged to explore their own heritage/ethnicity or the heritage/ethnicity of others through first hand experience. Students will be encouraged to record and/or write down conversations with a grandfather or grandmother or visiting the home/neighborhood ones parents were raised in. Thus students will be exposed to the idea of keeping their own Oral History.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Following are three examples of the lifestyles and legacies of three of the hundreds of Native American groups that lived in North America. For a more complete overview of the diverse peoples we called the Native Americans please consult, The Native Americans, Colin F. Taylor (ed.), which is listed in the bibliography.

The Iroquois - *People of the Longhouse*

In some ways Indians were alike, but in many ways they were greatly different. Indians were farmers or hunters, wanderers or town dwellers. They were skilled in arts and crafts, clever in inventions, and talented in their music and poetry. They were warriors when they needed to be, and were peaceful when left alone. They lived simply, or they lived in great temples which they built themselves. And, they each had their own distinct dress and language. The Iroquois were one such group among these great people called the Indians.

The Iroquois, or "People of the Longhouse," founded an Indian league which stood for peace and brotherhood.



The defeat of the Iroquois in 1609 at Lake Champlain by a force of Huron, Montagnais, and Ottawa. Palm trees, hammocks, and nakedness are the artist's inventions.

It is said to have been the first United Nations. It was formed by five great tribes which were part of the large family group we call the Iroquois. The five tribes include: the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. Their villages covered most of the Eastern continent of the United States.

The Iroquois were known for their great ability to govern their tribes. The foundation of their league was equality for all. The sachems, or chiefs, were the same as any other people. They had no rights above others, and they were not rulers. Their lives were spent in service. They did not own anything. In fact, when the Constitution of the United States were written, ideas for it were taken from the Iroquois form of government.

Like other people, the Iroquois were both good and bad. People are generally the same the world over. They were loving to one another and friendly and kind to strangers. They were generous, sharing what they had, even when they had little. Gentle and merry, the Indians were fond of jokes, playing games and enjoying social gatherings. In war, however, they were cruel and ruthless, but then this is what the outcome of all wars is.

The Iroquois lived deep in the forest which provided all that they needed. Every part of a tree was put to use. Although they wandered in search of game, they were not true wanderers. They lived in villages and raised most of their food. An Iroquois home was a long house made of a framework of young trees covered with elm bark. Their houses resembled a loaf of bread. Ten to twenty families lived in one house. Each family had a fireplace in the center of its part of the house.

The women of the Iroquois were the field workers because the Indians believed that the Earth Creator had divided work among women and men. Therefore, anything that had to do with the home or creation belonged to women. The men were the providers and defenders. In an Indian village, every person worked at something, both the old and the young.

The Indian world was filled with spirits, both good and bad. Everything on the earth or in the sky had its own spirit. The spirit of good created the world and all that is

good in it, while his twin brother was the spirit of evil. He made all bad things on the earth.

since the Iroquois had no written language, the wampum beads became their way to record the events in history. The Indian wampum beads made from clamshells by the New England Indians living along the coast were valued more than anything else by the Iroquois. The wampum beads were white, purple (the most valuable), black, and the natural shell colors. Each color had its own meaning.

The craft of the Iroquois was woodworking and carving. Wooden bowls, dippers, and ladles were carved. The ladle ends were formed into squirrels, birds, beavers, or seated human figures. Baskets were woven from black ashwood that had been pounded into pliable wood splints. Corn husks were twisted into a braid and used to make jars, baskets and sandals. After the Europeans arrived, the Iroquois etched or cut Indian designs into jewelry made from silver and nickel.

Today there are about 50,000 Iroquois Indians. They live on and off reservation land in New York State and southern Canada, and the state is responsible for their welfare. All Indian children go to public schools. Many of the Iroquois have given themselves a name in the steelworkers business. In fact, they have worked on some of the tallest buildings and greatest bridges. The Iroquois, like all Indians, contributed much to the value of our heritage. They continue the struggle to find ways to keep the best of their own Indian heritage while living in a non-Indian culture.

The Plains Indians

About 300-years ago, only Indians lived in the center of North America. About 20 different Indian tribes inhabited the area known as the Great Plains. People from Sioux, Crow, Comanche, Apache, Cheyenne, and Pawnee made the Plains their home. Each group of people had their own languages, history, and culture. The names of these tribes may sound familiar than those of other tribes because of the many TV shows, movies, and books which have often shown an exaggerated or stereotypical view of the Plains Indians of the 19th-century.

Many of the Plains Indians subsisted on hunting alone. They hunted wolves and coyotes, but primarily buffalo. They were nomads who lived in portable homes called tepees as they roamed the Plains in search of buffalo. The buffalo provided them with necessities of life: food, clothing, and shelter. No part of the buffalo was ever wasted and they were only killed as needed.

Historically, the climate in the Great Plains was harsh. Summers were hot and dry while winters were long, snowy, and cold. Not many Native Americans settled in the vast Plains due to these conditions. Those who did were sometimes driven off by droughts.

Tribes were eventually driven westward by other tribes who had acquired guns from the French and British traders. The Sioux were driven onto the Plains from the edge of the eastern forests by the Ojibways. The Sioux in turn forced the Cheyenne onto the Plains to the Missouri River. Plains and other Indians had many beliefs in common. Living so close to Nature, the Earth was regarded as their mother and they worshipped the Sun. The land was very important to them and was also sacred to them. Many tribes also relied on medicine men, combination doctors and priests who were trained in the use of medicinal plants.



A member of the Mandan Buffalo Bull Society, painted by Karl Bodmer (1837). He wears a complete buffalo head mask, marking him as one of the leaders of the Bull dance.

Pueblo Indians

Of all of the Indians, the Pueblo Indians most were unlike the typical "Hollywood Indians." They are part of a group that settled in the Southwestern part of the United States (the states of Arizona and New Mexico) and Sonora and part of Chihuahua in Mexico. Unlike other regions of North America, over twenty-five Native American groups have survived the onslaught of European expansion and been able to remain on their traditional homelands with some compliment of their distinctive customs as enclaved cultures. These groups represent almost three-quarters of the Native American cultures that inhabited the region at the time of the first Spanish exploration almost 500 years ago.

Native Americans came to the Southwest at least 12,000 years ago. In these early times people were hunters and gatherers of wild plants. As the environment changed, these peoples, whose cultures emerged around 6,000 BC, began to experiment with growing food around 2,500-3,000 BC

Slowly the peoples of the Southwest developed distinctive cultures; those living in the mountainous regions are called the Mogollon, those on the Colorado Plateau, the Basketmakers and Anasazi, and those in the western and central parts of the region, the Patayan, Sinagua and Salado. Each group became horticultists growing corn, beans and squash supplemented by hunting and the gathering of wild foods. Each adapted in different ways to their special environments. Around 300 BC migrations brought new groups into the Southwest from Mexico. These individuals quickly developed a culture, known as Hohokam, that was based on agricultural traditions. Living in central and southern Arizona they built extensive irrigations



systems, refined tools and monumental architecture. Except for those people who lived in areas that could not support agriculture, all these prehistoric people lived in permanent and semi-permanent villages. Some were so large and complex that they resembled small towns with extensive and complex organizations.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were a time of great population movement which has not yet been fully explained. Following a large drought, old regions were abandoned, the largest trading centers no longer used. Groups collected and settlements were frequently abandoned. The Pueblo Indians (The Puebloans), the O'Odham (Pima) and the Yumans settled in what is now called their traditional homelands. Heralded in an extensive series of clan or migrations legends, each group has a rich oral history about this period.

In northern New Mexico and Arizona, on the Colorado Plateau and along the Rio Grande River, the Puebloan peoples were most in evidence—with a population of over 40,000—living in ninety villages. Today there are only thirty; the others have been abandoned because of drought, disease and warfare. Called Pueblo Indians by the early Spanish explorers because of their distinctive architecture—permanent, compact, multi-chambered houses made of stone and adobe—these peoples were the descendants of the Anasazi and Mogollon peoples. Pueblo, which means "village dweller," was an accurate reflection of Pueblo life. The Pueblo Indians did not constitute a tribe; each Puebloan culture was a village that functioned as an autonomous political entity. This doesn't mean that these groups lived in a vacuum. They traded with one another, recognized common ancestry, occasionally intermarried and shared many similar values and world views.

The Puebloan peoples speak many different languages. The largest language group is *Tanoan*, part of the Kiowa-Tanoan language family. Tanoan consists of three main languages: *Tiwa*, *Tewa* and *Towa*. Besides language, the Pueblos are divided into two main sub-groups based on location and ecological adaptation. The Eastern Pueblos (Tanoan and Keresan speakers), who lived on the Rio Grande, have a permanent water source enabling them to practice irrigation agriculture. The Western Pueblos (Hopi, Hopi-Tewa, Zuni, Acoma and Laguna), lacking a steady supply of water,

rely on dry farming. The difference in water supply affects many aspect of culture from food procurement to religion. Economically all Puebloans are agriculturalists. Many also raise small herds of sheep and cattle, produce art---such as weaving, silversmithing, jewelry, katchina dolls, pottery and baskets.

With the Pueblo Indians religion transcends and permeates all aspects of life, including interaction patterns with the land, with other peoples and with the supernaturals. All aspects of Puebloan life---art, crafts, economics, social structure and the family---are inextricably interwoven and integrated under a single world view. From the simple tenet that people must live in harmony with nature, the Pueblo Indians have developed rich cultural traditions that are expressed in poetry, legends, song, dance and art. In this way central values are given outward expression. For example, many of the designs on pottery are derived from motifs connected with ceremonial life. Architecturally the center of a village both physically and symbolically, is a special chamber called *kivas*. Here private and communal rites are performed daily and at appropriate times throughout the year. Prayers are given for blessing and to insure the germination and maturation of crops and to give thanks for good health. Through religion all else is given significance.

This thematic unit was originally designed with a third grade class in mind.

As part of our preparation we were able

to obtain information about "What do you know/What do you want to know" from Susie Weston's 3rd grade class at Woodcrest Elementary School, Fullerton. The students' questions are listed below:

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:

WHAT DO THEY KNOW

- The Indians killed the buffaloes
- 70,00 years ago Native Americans had to take their baths in a pond
- Native Americans tells stories with their hands
- Native Americans were the first people in this country
- Native Americans is someone who was here before us
- The White People weren't nice to the Indian
- The Native Americans were the 1st people in the US
- Native Americans cooked for their food
- they live in a very cold place
- Native Americans were nice to the white people
- Native Americans are Indians
- there wore masks on their faces to salute their gods
- they lived in tepees
- they killed animals to eat
- Indians have very dark skin
- Native Americans are a family of Americans
- Native Americans had to kill for their food
- the white people killed a lot of Indians
- they danced with their friends
- Native Americans had gods
- There are not many Indians in the US

WHAT DO THEY WANT TO KNOW

- Why do people call Indians "Indians"? (Janet)
- Why are the Indians brown? (Guadalupe)
- How do the Indians kill the animals (Roldon)
- Why do the Indians hunt? (Thom)
- Why do the Indians have arrows? (Hen)
- How did they make bows and arrows and spears (Allanjay)
- How do they cut the trees? (Jesse G)
- Why do Indians ride on horses? (Cindy)
- Why do the Indians live in tepees (Cindy)
- How do they make their tepees? (Jesse G)
- What kind of material do they use on tepees (LaToya)
- How does the Indian make feathers? (sara)
- Why do Indians wear feathers on their heads and masks on their faces? (William)
- How come they dance? (Edgar)
- How do they celebrate their culture (Ashley)
- Why did the while people kill some of the Indians? (Jeanette)
- Why did the Indians start thanksgiving? (Justine)
- Why did the white people didn't share with the Indians (Hoonie)
- How did the Indians come to America (Isaias)

PLANNING THE THEME: THEME PROGRESSION

Because our emphasis is on "first hand" experience and primary sources, we will begin our unit with the interview video with our Native American spokesperson. Next we would introduce how different Indian groups in different ways. Depending on time constraints, we would break the class into separate tribes from different regions and have the groups jigsaw/expert their "tribes." Students would also experience the culture during the unit by participating in various crafts (including building a tepee) and reading Native American literature. Progress through the unit will be tracked using student journals.

**PLANNING THE THEME:
MULTIDISCIPLINE
MULTIMODAL WEB**

Listening/Speaking

Stories
Re-telling of stories in cooperative
groups
Reader's theater
Guest speakers

Reading

See Bibliography

Social Science

Grinding corn
family unit role playing

Writing

Journals
Book rewrites
Letters to Indians
Research Logs
Story Maps
Portfolios

**Native
Americans**

Science

cultivate maze
ecology food web
- interdependence

Math

Graphing maze growth
Story problems

Art/Music

Weavings
Pictorial drawing of stories
Pottery/clay working
Woodworking/carving

Special Activities

Field trips:
Bowers Museum
Southwest Museum
Guest speakers:
Authentic voices
Interview/videos:
Ray Whitecloud video
Movies:
see resource list

PLANNING THE THEME: STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Student assessment will be tracked using student journals and participation in group activities. At the conclusion of this thematic unit the students will be able to demonstrate verbally, in their journals and/or pictorially that Native Americans are not the war-mongering savages often portrayed in popular media. After having an opportunity to listen and respond to a Native American leader students will write letters to ask additional questions and/or to share brief comments. Students will also demonstrate their understanding of Native Americans by doing Native American crafts such as painting and pottery (under highly controlled circumstances woodcarving could be "simulated" using bars of soap and plastic knives).

Joe Bustillos
November 23, 1993
Mrs. Brown's Grade 5 Class
Ed508/LangArts:
Soohoo

PLANNING THE THEME: SAMPLE LESSONS

Known By Their Own Words: Ray Whitecloud - "Spirit Man"

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be introduced to a Native American "Spirit Man", Ray Whitecloud and will compare previous knowledge of Native Americans with Whitecloud's answer to "typical" questions about American Indians.

CONCEPTS:

- One way to constructively confront diversity is to let the "other group" describe themselves in their own words.
- Dialog is an important way for diverse peoples to get to know each other with one group/person asking questions of the second (thus the second gains knowledge about what is important to the first and the first has those questions answered), and visa-versa.
- It is important to get information/knowledge about differing peoples directly or as directly as possible from the people one wants to know about.

MATERIALS:

- TV, video-player, copy of taped interview
- Whitecloud response poster and "response sheets" (one per student = 30 copies?)

PROCEDURE:

- **Introduction:** Favorite movies with indians? Things you've learned since beginning this unit? What questions would you have if you were to meet an indian?
- **Video:** view Ray Whitecloud interview (hold additional questions until end of video)
- **Student De-briefing:** additional questions, difficult terminology (eg., "indigenous people").
- **Student Activity:** write or draw follow-up questions or comments to be sent to Mr. Ray Whitecloud (5 - 10 minutes).

PLANNING THE THEME: LITERATURE LIST

Bierhorst, John (1993). The Iroquois Story of Creation, *The Woman Who Fell from the Sky*. New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc. A retelling of the Iroquois creation story, the world as we know it begins with a woman and her twin sons. Using her creation powers, she forms the earth and stars. Her sons represent the two forces in the universe: the good and the evil.

dePaola, Tomie (1988). The legend of the Indian Paintbrush. New York: G.P.Putnam. A retelling of the legend of how the Indians got such vivid colors in their paintings.

Goble, Paul (1988). Her Seven Brothers. New York: Bradbury Press. A retelling of the Cheyenne legend of the creation of the Big Dipper. A young Indian girl makes shirts and moccasins for seven brothers she has not yet met, and the elders of her tribe believe that unseen powers have spoken to her.

Goble, Paul (1991). Iktomi and the Buffalo Skull. New York: Orchard Books. This story of the trickster who gets his head stuck in a skull was told throughout the Great Plains. Because the buffalo skull is considered sacred, Iktomi learns the lesson of not disturbing things which should be left alone.

Goble, Paul (1985). The Great Race. New York: Bradbury Press. This is a myth of the Cheyenne and Sioux. There was a time when buffalo had incredible powers and even ate people. It was by winning the great race, in which all the birds and animals ran, that mankind had power over the buffalo.

Gridley, Marion (1969). Indian Nations: The Story of the Iroquois. New York: GP. Putnam's Sons. The first in a series of authentic books about Indian Nations that have made significant contributions to our heritage and also are representative of particular cultures.

London, Jonathan (1993). A Karuk Coyote Tale: Fire Race. San Francisco: Chronicle Books. Inspired by a legend of the Karuk people, the author retells this captivating tale of a wise old coyote, the trickster-hero featured in many Native American stories, and his plan to steal fire from the wicked Yellow Jacket sisters, so that all the animal people would be warm.

May, R. (1987). The Plains Indians of North America. Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Publications. This book is an account of the history of all of the different Plains tribes as a whole. It includes their lifestyles, customs, and fights for survival against the European invasion.

McCall, Barbara (1989). Native American People: The Iroquois. Florida: Rourke Publications, Inc. A book in a series on Native American People. These books examine their myths, their history, their social structure and daily life, their warriors and wise men, their victories and defeats.

Nechodom, Kerry (1992). A Chumash Legend: The Rainbow Bridge. California: Sand River Press. Limuw (Lim-you), a Chumash boy who swims with the dolphins joins his Grandfather beside the campfire to learn of the ancient legends of coming of fire and the first dolphins.

Ortiz, Simon (1988). The People Shall Continue. California: Children's Book Press.

This is an epic story of Native American People. It extends in time from the Creation to the present day; it touches all aspects of life; it speaks in the rhythms of traditional oral narrative.

Spencer, R.F., and Jennings, J.D., et. al. (1977). Ethnology and Backgrounds of the North American Indians. Second Edition. The Native Americans. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers. An in-depth introduction to the American Indian for the general reader.

Step toe, John (1989). A Native Ameican Legend. The Story of Jumping Mouse. New York: Mulberry Books. This is a retelling of the legend of the Great Plains Indians. The gifts of Magic Frog and his own unselfish spirit take mouse to the far off land where no mouse goes hungry.

Taylor, Colin F., editor (1991). The Native Americans: The Indigenous People of North America. New York: Smithmark Publishers, Inc. An incredible resource for all the Indian peoples of North America. Great illustrations, maps and diagrams.

Tunis, Edwin (1959). Revised edition. Indian. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell. A pictoral re-creation of Ameican Indian Life before the arrival of the white man, told in lively text and more than 245 accurate drawings.

PLANNING THE THEME: ANNOTATED RESOURCE LIST

- Films:

"Dances with Wolves" (1990) A modern film which was considered very fair to Indians by a first-hand source.

"F-Troop" a 1960's TV show - A good example of bad "Hollywood Indians" (most of whom were played by Italians).

"Geronimo" (1993) A very recent film claiming to portray a more fair view of Indians (though the warrior aspect is still in the forefront).

"How the West was Lost" (1993) documentary film, following the success of a PBS series on the Western Expansion, this film was released with a decidedly Native American point of view.

"How the West was Won" (1962) film, the original Western Expansion "blockbuster" from the traditional Hollywood (Eurocentric) point of view.

"Last of the Mohicans" (1936/1977/1993) Several films based on the Jame Fenimore Cooper novel about the French-Indian Wars. The original version was sculpted in the "How the West Was Won" Hollywood Blockbuster (Eurocentric) genre. The most recent version more reflected the "Political Correctness" of the early 1990's---film critics noted that the "bad Indians" were balanced with the "good Indians" and also that reasons were given for the behavior of the "bad Indians" (tribal rejection and revenge).

"The Lone Ranger" radio/film/TV, another inarticulate Indian, although a loyal sidekick to the hero (not too surprising considering how the real Texas Rangers symbolized Anti-Mexican Anglo-expansionism to some familiar with the era).

- Interviews: eg., "Ray Whitecloud - Spirit Man" (1993) Video tape

*produced by
Joe B.*

RESEARCH QUESTION
DISCOVERIES